

# Wayne Tower School Wellness Policy

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## Preamble

Tower School in Wayne, Nebraska, is a level III program providing contracted services to school districts in Northeast Nebraska in an alternative setting. Student populations include severe and profoundly handicapped students, autistic students, students with psychiatric conditions and behavioral disorders, as well as other student populations; all requiring individualized level III services. In order to attend Tower School, all students must be verified with a disability to receive special education services and have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Tower School provides a specialized educational focus on behavior modification, social skills, functional skills, daily living skills, job skills, transition skills and ultimately prepares students to be contributing members of society and experience success in a variety of settings. Each school district that contracts for services is responsible for providing academic curriculum, in addition to transporting their students. Students from an average of 10 different school districts arrive at Tower between 8 am and 9:30 am and leave between 1:40 pm and 2:45 pm. Although the uniqueness of our program presents challenges in structuring a wellness program that resembles that of a traditional school, we fully embrace all opportunities to provide a positive, health-promoting school community that instills habits of lifelong learning and health.

Wayne Tower School (hereto referred to as the District) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments throughout the school year. This policy outlines the District's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day.

Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day - both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus - in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active during the school day;
- The District engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The student's home school district is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and

- The District establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students and staff in the District.

## **School Wellness Committee**

### ***Committee Role and Membership***

The District will convene a representative district wellness committee (hereto referred to as the DWC) that meets at least three times per year to establish goals and oversee school health, wellness, and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The DWC membership will represent (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program; school health professionals; school administrators; and the general public. To the extent possible, the DWC will include involvement from each participating school to reflect the diversity of the community.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Role</b>
Stuart Clark	SPED Director	sclark@esu1.org	Chair
Chantelle Nelson	Program Coordinator	snelson@esu1.org	Member
Jessica Henrich	SPED Teacher/Community Member	jhenrich@esu1.org	Member
Amber Daffer	SPED Teacher	adaffer@esu1.org	Member
Arianne Conley	Nurse	aconley@esu1.org	Member
Monica Warner	Dietary Services/Secretary	mwarner@esu1.org	Member
Student	Student		Member
Parent/Community Member	Parent/Community Member		Member

# **Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement**

## ***Implementation Plan***

The District will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to the District, and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where, and when, as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

## ***Recordkeeping***

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the school. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit DWC membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups' participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Documentation of annual policy progress; and;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual policy progress, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

## ***Annual Progress Reports***

The District will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress of the schools within the district in meeting wellness goals. This annual report will be published around the same time each year. This report will include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
- A description of the school's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
- A summary of each school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation;
- The name, position title, and contact information of the designated District policy leader(s) identified in Section I; and
- Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the DWC.

The District will actively notify households/families of the availability of the annual report.

The DWC, will establish and monitor goals and for each of the content-specific components listed in Sections III-V of this policy.

The District will also track and annually report other related information, such as findings from food safety inspections, aggregate participation in school meal programs, and other such information, as feasible.

### ***Triennial Progress Assessments***

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- Evidence that the District is in compliance with the wellness policy; The extent to which the District's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is Stuart Clark, SPED Director, 211 10<sup>th</sup> St., Wakefield, NE 68784.

The DWC will monitor the schools compliance with this wellness policy.

The District will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

### ***Revisions and Updating the Policy***

The DWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

### ***Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications***

Although our community spans across multiple counties, the District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the DWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for each participating school district. The District will ensure that all participating school districts have access to Tower School's wellness policy and provide opportunities for wellness promotion as able. The District will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The District will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. The District will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the district and individual schools are communicating other important school information with parents.

The District will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually. District will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

## **Nutrition**

### ***School Meals***

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams trans fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

The District receives meals from Wayne Community Schools in Wayne, NE through a cooperative food service agreement. Wayne Community School participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The District is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices

In addition:

- Students will be discouraged from sharing food and be prohibited from sharing foods brought from home. Parents will be encouraged via health promotional materials to make healthy choices for student lunches.
- Scheduling meals. Lunch periods will be scheduled at times when students are in need of nutrition (e.g., in the middle of their school day). Students will be provided adequate time to eat. In general, students will upon arrival in the cafeteria have at least 30 minutes to eat lunch.
- Conditions for meals. Efforts shall be made to establish comfortable and relaxed eating conditions. The factors to promote these conditions will be a clean, orderly environment, pleasant staff, adequate seating enforcement of student conduct rules and adequate supervision.
- Sanitation regulations set forth by the State of Nebraska regarding meal service will be continuously upheld.

## ***Staff Qualifications and Professional Development***

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

## ***Water***

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring (approved) water bottles filled with only water to carry with them throughout the day.

- Water cups will be available in the cafeteria for filling at the adjacent water fountain.
- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards.

## ***Competitive Foods and Beverages***

The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, and snack or food carts. The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

## ***Celebrations and Rewards***

The District's goal is foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and from the USDA.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The District will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards; and
3. Rewards and incentives. The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. No foods of minimal nutritional value are to be provided by

the school or school staff for instructional purposes (e.g., cultural programs, FCS classes, and foods given in accordance with a Level III student's IEP are exempt)

### ***Fundraising***

- Our District will only promote non-food fundraisers, and encourage those promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, jump rope for heart, fun runs, etc.).

### ***Nutrition Promotion***

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the school, classrooms, and cafeteria. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

### ***Nutrition Education***

The District aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The District will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other aspects of classroom instruction
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

### ***Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education***

The District will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention;
- Food guidance from MyPlate;
- Reading and using USDA's food labels;

- Eating a variety of foods every day;
- Balancing food intake and physical activity;
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products;
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans fat;
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars;
- Eating more calcium-rich foods;
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks;
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices;
- Accepting body size differences;
- Food safety;
- Importance of water consumption;
- Importance of eating breakfast;
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants;
- Eating disorders;
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans;
- Reducing sodium intake;
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture;
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior;
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior;

USDA's Team Nutrition provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu graphics, and more.

### ***Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools***

The District is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition, such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.

Food advertising and marketing is defined as an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product.

### **Physical Activity**

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. In a traditional school setting a substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program. Given our District's unique setting and student

population, a variety of physical activity opportunities will be promoted and provided daily to all students regardless of severity of functional impairments.

Activities include:

- Exercise and yoga programs are available and encouraged at the start of each school day.
- The use of ball chairs in the classroom. Students may also stand at their desk.
- Throughout the week, students participate in regularly planned physical indoor/outdoor activities to promote teamwork and physical exercise.
- Daily honors time opportunities are available for additional movement based activities.
- Indoor/outdoor recess is provided daily.
- A sensory room with a variety of sensory-based activities involving movement is utilized daily.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in indoor, outdoor, and classroom based physical activities. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt the environment and equipment as necessary.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or planned indoor/outdoor movement based classroom activities) shall not be withheld as punishment. A student may be excluded from a group physical activity opportunity, but will be provided an individualized substitute activity, if they are unable to demonstrate safe or appropriate behavior.

To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

### ***Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education***

The District will include education in the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity;
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight;
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process;
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease;
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition;
- Differences between physical activity, exercise, and fitness;
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down;
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching;
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity;
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community;
- Preventing injury during physical activity;
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia, and sunburn while being physically active;
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time, and type of physical activity;

- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan;
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan;
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids;
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers, and culture;
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness;
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity;
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity;

### ***Recess***

The District will offer at least 15-20 minutes of recess and 30 minutes of team building on all or most days during the school year.

**Outdoor recess** will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Outside recesses are required throughout the year for all students. They are expected to wear adequate clothing and boots for cold and wet weather. The program coordinator will make the final decision as to whether students remain outside or in the building due to a variety of playground and weather conditions, including:

- When weather is raining or snowing heavily;
- When the temperature or wind chill factor is 0 degrees Fahrenheit;
- When lightening or approaching storm is in the immediate area.

In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Recess will complement, not substitute, additional physical activity opportunities such as team building and planned physical activity based classroom time. Paras and teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### ***Physical Activity Breaks***

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The District recommends short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will include planned physical activity opportunities and class transition times.

The District will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

### ***Active Academics***

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The District will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects.

## **Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity areas. The District will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the DWC.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities.

### ***Community Partnerships***

The District will develop, enhance, or continue relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, local health department, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

### ***Community Health Promotion and Engagement***

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed of the DMC goals and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the "Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications" subsection, the District will use electronic mechanisms (such as email or displaying notices on the district's website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

### ***Staff Wellness and Health Promotion***

The DWC will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources, and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff. The subcommittee leader's name is Arianne Conley.

The District will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Examples of strategies used, as well as specific actions staff members can take; include EHA Wellness health promotion activities, blood pressure and weight monitoring, and staff immunizations.

The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible, free, and group inclusive.

